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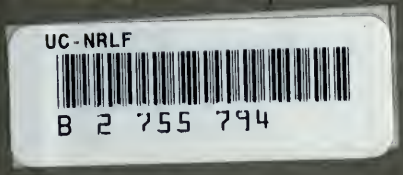

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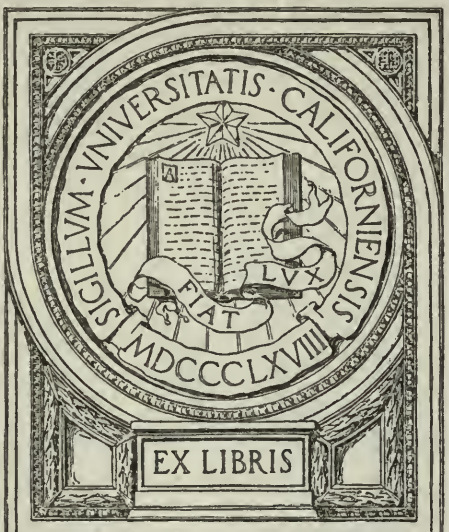

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What Constitutes a Finished Education

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

Leavitt of Wallace D.D.

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Delivered on Commencement Day
At Mills College, Cal.
May 27, 1896
By Rev. L. H. Hallock, D. D.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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WHAT CONSTITUTES A FINISHED EDUCATION.

Delivered on Commencement Day, at Mills College, Cal., May 27, 1896, by Rev. L. H. Hallock, D. D.

Not the end of a college course—that is justly called "Commencement;" not the end of learning, for no true woman or man ever ceases to learn; but what is the scope and aim of true education?

In art and music, in law and medicine, some things are accounted essential, while some are optional. To discriminate is important, lest one expend his chief strength upon the superficial, to the neglect of the radical and basic. Let us master essentials first, graces and decorations, if possible, afterward. That the singer stand in graceful pose is desirable, but that she utter true notes is imperative; to memorize facts is good, but to *learn to think* is indispensable.

Education does not consist in the mere knowledge of facts. In this 'bridging decade' of our century, over which trooping thoughts unceasing tread, not a tithe of important facts can memory retain; but education is not in memorized facts; it is a quality of mind which can master facts and mould mankind.

If education consisted in memorizing, what an illimitable list of items stretches hopelessly before us!

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In literature, for instance, whose gems sparkle in the dome around and above us like stars in the night sky, how many, many authors, classic and modern, there are whom one must know; so much art also to master, for all literature has illumined itself with the artists' pencil; so much science to study, for science has threaded literature through and through with her flying shuttle; language and history and commerce must be understood, for they all have a literature of their own; and jurisprudence and the great philosophies, psychology and sociology, all must be somewhat familiar if we would claim to have grasped the scope and richness of general literature. Omit either of these, and your literary education is partial.

Or, if one would become versed in the classics; the wealth of many tongues, Oriental and Occidental, ancient and recent, displays a boundless field; so great that life is too short to explore even the vestibule of the many linguistic mansions which the ages have builded—with strange alphabets and foreign superstructure—until the mind wearies with the endeavor, and we become content at length to taste only a few tongues of the earth, and let the rest wait for a world that has more time in which to explore the mysteries of manifold human speech.

Or, in science what awaits us? Not only must we master the old laws and principles which our fathers knew, but on whirling, steam-driven wheels, and along the line of winged wires, must

we fly, to keep abreast of the latest in Roentgen's rays or Tesla's lights, the new surgery and pathology, telescopic and microscopic achievements of each flitting hour.

If knowledge of facts were an essential education, the scientist must be ever in pursuit of the newest, lest he become a fossil, foraging over ancient and forgotten fields. For we tread to-day the highway of discovery, and we tread it fast. Edison and his compeers keep us out of breath in the chase, and make earnest haste themselves; for life is short, and the far fringe only of the fertile forest is yet explored. Secrets of matter and of mind, and the universe of heavenly being, lie all about us, and only just now have we lifted a lower corner of the enshrouding veil. We cannot even inventory the facts and phenomena of the universe; we can only sample them, and much that we learn we soon forget.

How, then, is education possible? It *is* possible, since education lies not in the secure possession of facts, but in that quality of mind which can comprehend, classify and compare events and principles as they develop. Disciplined mind is educated mind, though multitudes of facts taught in the college curriculum may have been forgotten or never mastered. Education is *mental quality*.

The educated mind sees a bone bleaching on the prairie, and builds the extinct animal that owned it; watches an eclipse, and knows that laws of planetary motion produce it; finds a bit

of quartz, scents a La France rose, sees the flying cloud, and from each deducts the proximity of gold, the evolution of the flower, the law of the dew-point and air current. Education is never surprised into superstition, never loses balance, for it apprehends the controlling law. While there is much that the educated man knows not, the key to all knowledge dangles from his wrist, and he can discourse more wisely about the newest discovery than he who never learned to think can upon familiar themes. This educated quality is attainable. It is the power to think. And that is truest education which teaches power of thought rather than that which crams the mind with masses of slippery things called facts. A mind may become encyclopedic in its possessions, but be neither resourceful nor efficient in shaping the course of human progress.

* * *

Now, there are certain vast areas of thought, of varying altitudes, which the mind should learn to travel intelligently. If either of these be omitted, education is partial and one-sided. If either is omitted, the student, for lack of it, may be left wholly at sea in some vital department of his being, and disaster inevitably follow.

When stormy seas are to be traversed, the seaman must know all the laws of navigation; wind and sails, placing the cargo and location of the ports, the compass and currents and the log,—all must be familiar unto him who is to command the merchant marine on treacherous main.

And since man is composite, and he, too, sails a perilous sea, from port to port, he who will make the voyage in safety should know the whole nature of man and his destiny, lest he be surprised, and so wrecked upon uncharted rocks or driven upon disastrous breakers.

I plead to-day for this all-round education. The world clamors for liberalism; so do I. The world would have men broad; so would I. But it is sometimes forgotten that greatness demands *height* as well as breadth. A phrenologist once examined the skull of a friend, and said: "You have a broad brain and if you only had half an inch more elevation you would be a genius."

There is much education to-day which seems broad and liberal, but because it reaches not unto the side toward God, is partial and perilous. How can that soul be well-defined and safe whose side that faces its Creator and King has not even been surveyed!

In our plea for the highest education, we are not asking for anything narrow or eccentric, but we take our stand with the modern critic in his demand for breadth and liberalism, only we go a step further; we demand that education be sufficiently broad to study the entire man, not a segment of his being; that it embrace soul as well as intellect, and eternity as well as time. If we study Nature, we do not limit ourselves to the mineral and vegetable kingdom, learning of rocks and rivers, grass and herbs alone,—but

we rise quickly to the animal, and spend our strength upon the fleet horse, the succulent mutton, the racy game and the laws of production and improvement. And so, if we would study man, God's masterpiece for whom all else exists, we must study not only his body and mind, but his soul also. If we would know man in the far reach of his princely being, surely we cannot leave unlearned that part which alone is immortal, and which chiefly differentiates him from the beasts that perish.

* * *

Education practically begins with the study of simple phenomena, with the physical and mercantile, matters of food and clothing. Witness a carpet weaver of Glasgow who knows all about the art of her loom, and can evolve its finest fruit. She is educated in a somewhat low and and limited sphere; her education is practical and commercial, and enables her to earn her living. So is that man educated who can pitch the latest curve in baseball, or organize the most resistless wedge in football. Neither department is the noblest possible, yet each is the product of training, each requires courage, self-control and some brain. The physical is always important, but the plane is comparatively low and the orbit of revolution narrow.

Next, we rise to matters of classification; to botany and geology, biology and physics; we move upward into the science of government, and to questions sociological, international, political,

to literature and fine art; and thus, with magnificent sweep, the horizon has broadened, and we now look upon a world above the common, out into the realm of genius and statesmanship. We have climbed the pyramid, from the drifting hot sands about its desert base, to where the air moves in fresher currents and the outlook widens; here is a broad plateau, and the State now provides for the education of its sons and daughters in this vast field which vitally touches the welfare of society. The State may have been slow in meeting this demand for higher education, but she has grandly provided for it now, and the day which is dawning is an auspicious one for our Republic.

Thus wealth is increased as well as brain. The educated person no longer stands aghast before the mountain, but proceeds to tunnel it for his railroad or sink a shaft to find its gold. The forest is no longer a wilderness unto him, but a nest of treasures which he proceeds to uncover for mills and masts, houses and ships. The sea is no longer a wild, wide thing, the relentless, mysterious shrine of the mermaid and the sceptered Neptune, but a grand highway of commerce, plowed with the keels of many a golden argosy, dotted with white wing of sail, or churned to foam by the triple screw of his ocean greyhound. Great problems of capital and of labor open to his master key, and the educated man or woman finds no gate locked which leads to fortune and to statecraft. To learn to think

in all these departments and traverse intelligently these many rich fields of knowledge is to be educated far beyond the necessities of a meagre, physical existence.

It is not long, however, before the student who has gone thus far in the study of social and political economy, discovers that laws of matter and of might are not sufficient to solve some problems that are rife in our seething communities.

Adjustments between man and man, or nation and tribe, king and subject, labor and capital, involve another element which the finger of force and of mere philosophy is too short to reach. Something in man rises higher than the stretch of his stature, and education adequate for the hour must strike into the region of morals and eternal rectitude. Not broadly educated, therefore, is any man until he has acquired some just criterion of judgment concerning the claims of the human conscience touching character and personal righteousness. So the State teaches morals, and offers men a potent solvent for many a high problem in ethics which the lower education could not furnish. This is an essential part of the higher education, and deeply concerns the health of the body politic. The State wisely provides for this, since it is vital to its welfare, and an important element in its honorable self-perpetuation. But the highest plane of human life and need is not yet reached. Mind and morals do not exhaust the man.

Beyond the palaces of kings, and the outlying homes of toil; beyond and above the galleries of art and castles of the knights; beyond the region of chivalry and gallantry, the commerce of merchants and rights of sovereigns, and all the vexed questions of human life and society, behold a world of temples! Listen to the unending echoes of worshipful music encircling the globe; witness a conscious immortality,—a longing look beyond the westward hills and the sunset, where stands the throne of the living God;—a wondering what is *for us* in that vast unknown. Yes, above the reach of the mercantile and the æsthetic is a lofty plateau of human thought and life, unto which many often aspire and all sometimes glance,—a region that lies open unto the face of God, silent but great,—the region of the soul; and we cannot deal adequately with problems that vex the race until we have studied there the religious and spiritual nature of man, and have looked honestly into his relation unto his Maker and his future.

That person is therefore only partially educated who has never explored the realm of religion; not narrow, sectarian religion, but religion broad and eternal—the relation of man to God, which is at the very heart centre of all lesser and human intercourse. The State does not educate its students in religion; probably it cannot; yet the necessity exists, and somehow, somewhere, this vital, vast field of study must be invaded. How, for instance, can one really ap-

prehend the throes of early Christian story, the revolutions of pagan Rome, the peopling of the Catacombs, and the transformations of ancient empire that has no conception of the Christ!

How can one fully comprehend the ecclesiasticism of medieval ages who has no experience of the power of religious conviction to master the soul beyond all other motive! Who can analyze the crusades!

Who can understand the mystery of the Mayflower,—cradle of our civil and religious liberty,—if he have never entered the domain of the spiritual or ever felt that power profounder than patriotism, tenderer than home ties, more lasting than love of life, which was able to make men oblivious to all these in supreme devotion to the God they loved!

History cannot be read intelligently without knowledge of religion; for religion is the golden thread shot through the fabric which gives it meaning and life. And God himself is the key of history; to discern God's plans will solve countless combinations otherwise inexplicable.

Education, therefore, is not complete until it has carefully studied not only the facts but the basic principles of the religious nature, and Christ the crown and glory of humanity, the sole supreme solvent of the stupendous problems still rife and unsettled in human society.

Hence the necessity for the Christian college. If the State cannot teach religion in its broad and eternal verities, private benevolence must.

For without this, the key of the highest human situation is still lost; the mind without this has still a fallow field, and the worst of it is, it is the home lot, nearest God; and until this fallow ground is broken up and these home acres tilled around the spot of our birth and the hearthstone of our God, finest fruits cannot appear and the vast bulk of our yet unexpended life still lies in black and solemn shadow. Without religion the rocket only flashes a little more brilliantly for a moment, but goes out into a darkness the more dreadful by contrast.

* * *

Even the present economy of this world cannot be fully understood without a knowledge of God and redemption. As well stand amid the whirr of the spindles in the spinning-room and expect to understand the mill from that alone, as aim to apprehend creation by standing on the periphery of the planet and seeing the phenomena there. You must step up to the office to know the mill; approach the throne to understand the world.

No education is adequate, however fine, which stops short of Christ. The pivotal point in human history is Calvary; and who can understand the world with Calvary left out? The turning upward of humanity begins at the cross, and they who omit the study of the Redeemer from their curriculum, have only viewed the complex factory from a subordinate room; they have seen the train whizz past them in the night, but

have not stood in the engineer's cab and seen him manipulate the throttle and set the air-brakes as he rounds perilous curves with his precious human freight. They have examined phenomena carefully but not from the Governor's throne; nor have they discovered God's ultimate motive in the creation of immortal souls.

The conqueror of the world is to be Christianity, but "Christianity will not conquer the world until it leads its thought." That day is already dawning; there is a distinctly marked reaction toward the recognition of an intelligent, personal Creator and the need of a knowledge of him.

Science finds that she cannot solve her equation and ignore this unknown quantity, God, and the leaders of the world's scientific thinking are beginning to admit this. Witness the latest utterances of Darwin and Huxley and many others.

You must look at man from God's standpoint or you are not fully educated. I would rather my daughter be graduated from a truly Christian college whence she had fully imbibed the spirit of the Christ, than from the highest secular university on the globe; for thus she will have attained a rounder, truer, more complete education. Breadth is not the only desirable dimension. The Christian scholar sees a horizon utterly unattainable to him of secularities only. The secular student sees as best he can, but he is near the earth, where atmospheric aberration and the curvature of the surface fatally handicap his

vision, but he who learns to sit with God on his throne, to see with God's eyes, and rise to the height of the sermon on the mount, above the mercenary and the sordid, to measure man with the measuring rod of the Redeemer, he alone is truly educated. Our culture may better lack detail than to lack breadth; but it may far better lack breadth even than to lack *altitude!*

Education therefore is not finished,—I had almost said is not truly begun,—until it has led the soul to reckon with its King.

The cheek may blush with beauty, the brain display its brilliant bloom, genius sparkle from every finger-tip, but if there be no vital spark of God within the soul, no divine cultus looking toward the Eternities,—we shall have blossomed but to fade.

True education is essentially and always Christian education!

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell;
> That mind and soul, according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster." —*Tennyson, In Memoriam.*

There is one other feature of a true education which must be achieved before it can be considered ideal. It must rise into the domain of *motive:* it must exist not for itself alone, but to lift society. It must be unselfish, magnanimous, charitable, beneficent. It must not only know God, but join hands with God to accomplish the high and holy purpose which He reveals and inspires.

Make the most of yourselves, young ladies, seeking education and refinement that you may thus become worthy specimens of the Creator's art, and thus glorify the Artist; but there is another aim which must not be omitted. Even God does not live solely to be good: He was good before He created anything, and would have been forever good without creation: but having created, as we study His evolutionary processes, we find Him leading His people, by hint and premium and prophecy, into an ever finer type, an ever clearer likeness unto Himself. That is, God exists not only to be good but to do good; by His love and life to lift men unto His throne. And the truly educated soul must have caught this conception and have adopted for himself this high ideal. "*Non nobis solum, sed bono publico.*" Be good that you may also be useful: multiply your talents that by expending them without stint you may better humanity by all that has bettered you. This is the grand closing chapter of our educational text book: "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

The great mountain which all admire, rising from the rosy-blue waters of Puget Sound, was called by the Indians "Tacoma," "nourishing breast." For that Mt. Tacoma, with her snowy heights gleaming, blushing, incarnadined with many a crimson sunset, glistening under the noon-day glare, or chill and ghostly on moonlight nights, crowned at 14,000 feet with the eter-

nal solitude of its own sublimity, was not content to be merely grand and majestic among mountains, admired and adored of men—but *because* it was supremely high and uncommon broad, it sent down from every shining flank and gleaming glacier-bank a river into every valley at its feet,—a river to feed the people,—from its ripples with sweetest fish, and from its banks with fruit and berry, enriching man with lofty timber and feasting him with the deer that feed among the lily-pads. "Nourishing breast" they named the unspeakable mountain, for it ministers unto men, even though through all its existing days it might have sung:

"Eternal snows for ages past have crowned my hoary head,
And vernal flowers for aeons past have wreathed my emerald bed;
Centuries' storms have beat my breast, and tempests cleft my side
Until my wounds by thousands are increased and multiplied;
Yet, whether day its gladness brings or night the earth enshrouds
Still I, in silent grandeur stand, and calmly kiss the clouds."

But if the most memorable characteristic of God's grandest mountain, immortalized in its native name, is *giving*,—even the wear and tear of the tempest contributing to enrich the savage at its feet, as Christ the sinning world,—surely the educated soul, truly knowing God and climbing high into His eternal counsels, must take the final step of true education and become, like Him, *beneficent!*

With that lesson learned, education is a finished thing; not ended, never ended, but rounded and rare, ready to take high place among God's efficient forces to make men better.

Young ladies of the graduating class: it has been your privilege, rare among women, to receive from your Alma Mater an education both broad and high.

You have been taught "*Mens sana in corpore sano*," but you have also learned that the soul is ignorant until it learns the secret of trust in God. Be loyal to the Christian teaching imparted here, and you shall command the respect of the world's Redeemer, of the world itself, and of your own soul forever.

Thus, like Mt. Tacoma, crowned with the sun, clothed in perpetual ermine, fertile valleys ever fruitful at its feet, you shall stand among mankind a benediction, "blessing and being blessed," hastening on the time when all shadows shall flee away and the dawn of eternal righteousness shine clear above the eastern hilltops; then shall human life be bright and beautiful, because Christian, and true education become universal, when all shall know the truth, and "the truth shall make men free."

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